The Visit of

Hon'ble Mr. V. V. GIRI,

Minister for Labour, Industries and Commerce,
Government of Madras

TO THE

ARTHUR HOPE POLYTECHNIC,
THE U. M. S. HOSTEL

AND THE

RADIO SECTION

OF THE

ARTHUR HOPE POLYTECHNIC,
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on

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Hon'ble **Mr. V. V. Giri,**

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on 30—9—1946.

Hon'ble Mr. V. V. Giri, Minister for Labour, Industries and Commerce accompanied by Mr. A. Khaleeli, Director of Industries and Commerce, paid a visit to the Arthur Hope Polytechnic at 9-30 a. m., on 30-9-1946. On arrival he was received by the Honorary Director, Mr. G. D. Naidu and taken round the Institute. He was much impressed by the practical work done by the students in the various sections. Soon after, a meeting of the students was held. **Mr. G. D. Naidu** made the following speech, wherein he insisted, that diploma must be given, if the students are able to pass the examination within two years, though the course may be for three years (with reference to No. 2775 C. 346 dated 31—8—46 of Industries and Commerce Department.):

Hon'ble Minister,

Before referring to the above subject I will explain briefly the origin and growth of the Arthur Hope Polytechnic. Though I was intending to write this letter long ago, I postponed the matter for your kind visit, because the Director of Industries said, that he would request the Hon'ble Minister to visit the Polytechnic. Hence I thought it better to present this letter in person during his visit to the Polytechnic. Whatever explanations are given in letters or in personal discussions, they are not at times understood cent percent except by seeing or experiencing in person. To prove this let me quote an instance here. On this subject, though I showed the records to the Members of the Technological Diploma Examination Board and discussed in a meeting with facts and figures, they were not satisfied. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will be fully satisfied by visiting this Institute and agree with my views.

Before touching the point in question, I will explain here some facts.

When I was in the United States during the first year of the war, no remittances were allowed to be made to me from India as the Central Government recorded me as

pro-German. Hence to maintain myself, I had the opportunity of attending more than 24 schools. I gathered very good experience and observed teaching more than learning myself. With that experience, after coming here I selected more than 120 students in order to impart my knowledge to them. Because I took students of very high educational qualifications, they were not able to satisfy me in learning and hence I was not able to continue this course.

One day after my retirement from very heavy transport service, when I was talking with Mr. Khaleeli, the Director of Industries and Commerce, the seed for the Arthur Hope Polytechnic was sown. Of course, Mr. Khaleeli was very clever to extract from me several equipments costing several lakhs of rupees in addition to one and a half lakhs of rupees in cash, while in other places, he has opened several Polytechnics same as this without getting anything. Of course, as a friend I obliged and I had the satisfaction of fulfilling my ambition to impart my knowledge to the youngsters. As no proper hand was available for the post of the Principal, I agreed to be the Principal.

The programme, drafted first as a provisional syllabus, contains a number of subjects. A student has to learn for 6 years

and 4 months for each of these subjects in the United States. All these subjects together were to be done here within 3 years. Accordingly one year is now over. In this Polytechnic unlike the other Government Institutions working days in a year are 295 in which if any student's attendance is less than 275, he will not be allowed to sit for that year's examination. It is compulsory, that all the students should live in the Hostel except those who have their parents in Coimbatore. The students are not allowed to go out of the Hostel except to the Institute. They have to give their attendance in the Hostel also. Only on one or two occasions in the whole year the students were allowed to go to pictures. Late arrivals in the Hostel and the Institute are recorded and counted to take proper action.

The Lecturers of the Institute also are working very hard. Ordinarily the working hours of a lecturer in an Institute will be one or two hours per day. But here the lecturers have to be in the works before the students and leave after the students. Apart from giving lectures they have to supervise the practical work of the students and give lectures whenever necessary. They have given lectures from 100 to 200 hours in the whole year. I have given

78 hours lectures in Automobile Engineering and 72 hours on practical work and general subjects per month from May 1945 to March 1946 except 3 weeks in the month of October. Of course, I don't grudge to spend still more time. But one American Engineer who came to our works for manufacturing some parts calculated the value of my time as Rs. 37/- per hour. If I spend such valuable time, I must get some return. That return need not be for myself. Let it be for the students or the Government or for anybody. That is the request I am going to ask the Hon'ble Minister in this long address for which I hope he will agree.

I conducted the annual examination in last March for which I set up question papers of very high standard. As a special members in the Technological Diploma Examination Board, I was asked to set up question papers for the 4th year students of the Technological Diploma Examination, in Automobile Engineering. The same question papers set up for the first year students of this Institute was given for the fourth year students also. The result was 30 here passed and 12 out of the 22 fourth year students passed. When I was discussing this matter in the Examination Board, I insisted the Board to give Diploma for the students of this Polytechnic as their

standard was better than the standard of the 4th year students of other institutions. Finally I requested to give Diploma at the end of the second year at least for which all the Members including the Director disagreed. If the Hon'ble Minister peruses the records, he will find that nobody supported me. On the other hand the Joint Director informed me that the expert committee recommended 4 years instead of 3 years and hence could not accept my suggestion. Now my question is if any clay-headed student be in an institute for four years will the Board award Diploma to him? Or if a student passes the standard examination set up by the Board in the first year, will the Board award Diploma to him? My request is that, if a student passes the standard examination the Board must give Diploma to him irrespective of the number of years. The objection of the Members is that the course must not be less than 4 years. I cannot see any reason why these young students instead of learning something in a short time with modern equipments and knowledge should waste their time and money in addition to the waste of the funds of the Government in maintaining 3 years instead of one year! If you approve the syllabus which is intended for 4 years even after 4 years with 60% marks please compare the expenses.

Instead of 500 to 800 rupees, a student must shell out Rs. 2,500/-. Apart from this his two or three years valuable time also is wasted. What about the staff of the Government? Is it not an enormous waste? In this institute, the budget sanctioned for last year was Rs. 82,500/- and the actual expense incurred was Rs. 11,724/-. This year the sanctioned budget is Rs. 1,64,000/-. Now 6 months are over and only Rs. 11,000/- and odd is spent.

I hope it will not be out of place to mention here, that from the beginning until now for about 19 months, no Principal was appointed, which costs Rs. 750/- per month. No Workshop Engineer is appointed, which costs Rs. 500/- per month. Until last month no Workshop Superintendent was appointed, which costs Rs. 200/- per month. From the beginning until the end of last year no Superintendent was appointed for the Radio Section. This also would have cost Rs. 200/- per month. For the first half year even lecturers were not appointed. Even now sufficient lecturers have not been appointed. One lecturer and 2 Superintendents are doing the work of the lecturers in addition to one or two honorary lecturers for whom nothing is paid, though I recommended to the Government for sanctioning some remuneration for their

work. For several months, no clerks, or accountant, or store clerk were appointed. Most of the work was done by myself and one or two clerks in my office. With all these troubles and sufferings, if the students are not to get Diploma, though they are able to pass the examination better than other students, why should I take so much trouble in this work? On account of this reason in addition to some other reasons, which I do not want to mention here my interest in the Institute is going down gradually for the last few months. I know it is not fair, but I cannot help. I have decided not to trouble myself unless I get this benefit for students. Further I do not want to trouble myself in turning students from their ancient custom of being in schools until they are old.

I have allowed the use of my buildings for the duration of the war. That period ends to-day. I promised that I would be the Honorary Director. That also had ended with one full year. Therefore nothing is there to blame me, if I leave the institute from to-day.

Now the Hon'ble Minister has seen the Institute, records, students and everything. If he is satisfied, he may please grant my request and order the Examination Board

to award Diploma. My request to the Hon'ble Minister is to issue orders and not to recommend, because no recommendation can turn the Members of the Board as they were also in the same type of schools started at the time of the East India Company and they may not like to see or have modern methods adopted for the modern generations. They may say that the standard must be the same in the whole Province. It is true. They may bring all the other Institutes to this standard. Because of this inconvenience, they should not refuse to give value for efficient and best standard. In case the Minister considers that this is not possible I request him to kindly accept my resignation from to-day in order to attend to my own work, which has been neglected for a long time. Further one of the departments in the Government is making me unfit to hold this post and before they do so, I would like to retire honourably from this post with your permission.

I also take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Khaleeli for arranging the visit of the Hon'ble Minister to this Institute. I most sincerely thank my old friend, Hon'ble Mr. V. V. Giri for having given us the honour of his first official visit in my time.

In Reply to Mr. G. D. Naidu,

Hon'ble **Mr. V. V. Giri**

Spoke as follows:

Mr. Naidu is an old friend of mine and when we started the All-India Planning Committee, Sir M. Visweswarayya and myself thought, that he must have the first place in that Committee. He is a practical Engineer of a type not easily found in this country. I do not wish to flatter him in his presence. And I always thought of dealing only with the strikes of students or strikes by workers but never strikes by employers and managers of big institutions. Mr. Naidu, you must have known sometimes to your cost and sometimes to your advantage, is not an easy person to deal with. But I am absolutely certain he has a heart inside which is quite soft. I know he does not mean executing a threat. It is only a reminder to Government to be very careful in managing the institutions of this country. I could see a good deal in what he has started. As he is a super Engineer, you will, by putting more years, be super engineers also which position may not be got by other Polytechnics. I would

certainly examine the question from the point of view of the hours, that are spent in the institution both by the lecturers and students, and see whether similar things cannot be done in other Polytechnics and I shall make Mr. Naidu responsible for that also. He wants to get out of the Institution. He will have to get into many institutions throughout the length and breadth of the land. Therefore, there is no use of his being selfish and saying,

> "Coimbatore is the only place for me and the students of Coimbatore are the only students with whom I am concerned".

He must produce and tell me "here you are in one or two years we can produce similar students that we are producing in Coimbatore" and if he proves to me that it can be done. I am sure Government will take his honorary services always and he must really set up an example to other institutions and tell them, as to what they should do.

I am not at all anxious, that course should be prolonged in any other Polytechnic, but at the same time I feel I am not an Engineer, I am not a practical worker, but still I am just generally interested in industrial planning of this country. Their course are quickly terminated and where

individual workers are made efficient by remaining a little longer time even after the diploma course is over, by doing some research, which can make them better students and they can get their diploma after that. I was taken by surprise because the Director of Industries did not tell me about this and he himself was not prepared to receive the bomb shells, that were thrown at us by Mr. Naidu. Any way I have always an open mind in these matters never wedded to think because they are ancient, never wedded to think because they are modern. I am both modern and ancient and anything that will make us a better nation. Therefore, certainly the matters stated by Mr. Naidu will have the Government's serious consideration and I am certain that the Director will have further discussion of these matters and if necessary all three of us will sit together and thereafter if necessary meet the Board after we examined the question, and place these matters before them. Anything that we can do to reduce the course certainly will be duly considered by the Government and with this promise, I want Mr. Naidu to withdraw his atom bombs, that he wanted to level against us and I am certain that with the help of Mr. Naidu the Polytechnic not only in Coimbatore, but other Polytechnics established in other parts of the

Province will be a success. He is our future hope. I am certain he will render benefit to other institutions so that they, young men, who are in the other Polytechnics to-day, will ever remember him through out their lifetime.

I am pleased at the way in which practical work is being taught to students here and I am absolutely certain that when you finish your course and take your diploma you will become very satisfactory engineers and it is my job and the Government's job to see that you are placed in life very well. There is great hope for mechanical and electrical engineers in this Country. Electricity is going to play a very large part in India. Madras Province as compared to other Provinces has become of late during the last few years greatly electricity minded. In five years we hope to double the load that we have got and with the help of men like Mr. Naidu we hope not only to double, but increase ten times the load, that we can produce. I feel the future of this country depends upon the extension of electricity to everybody who wants it. There are citizens, who are prepared to have electricity for the benefit of agricultural development and development of cottage industries and development of big industries. With great citizens and

engineers like Mr. Naidu, all these great things will be possible.

I want to tell you, that in our country we must discipline imposed upon you. I want Mr. Naidu to change his views about Fascism, Hitlerism, Stalinism etc., and really make you disciplined people. He knows how to make you very disciplined, but that discipline also should be based upon the spirit of democracy so that when you have to deal with persons they must also feel, that they can deal with him. I am very glad that with the things you learn here you will not only become good engineers, but also good citizens.

Then the Minister went round the U.M.S. Central Station and the Canteen. He was much impressed with the neatness of the Canteen and was pleased to remark that the mills should copy this canteen. In the night he was entertained at a dinner at the Andhra Students Hostel. The Minister said that the students should forget that they are Andhras and Tamilians and think they are Indians first. He also praised Mr. Naidu in building such a clean Hostel.

RECEPTION TO

Hon'ble **Mr. V. V. GIRI**

at the U. M. S. HOSTEL

The inmate of the U. M. S. Hostel entertained Hon'ble Mr. V. V. Giri at a lunch on the October 1, in their premises at 1 p. m. Those present including Mr. A. Khaleeli, the Director of Industries and Commerce, Mr. C. K. Vijayaraghavan, Labour Commissioner, Dr. and Mrs. J. J. Rudra, Mr. C. Chandran, Rao Bahadur J. C. Ryan and others.

Welcoming Hon'ble Mr. V. V. Giri,

Mr. G. D. NAIDU

made the following speech :

Education is so fundamental to the well being of a people, that it is impossible to decide, whether the Government is standing on the foundation of the educational system, or whether the educational system is dependent on the Government. The freedom and prosperity of a country depend only on the education of its youth. A system of suitable education can easily convert any people into a ruling nation. The present educational system in our country was started some 100 and 1000 years back and is responsible for having kept our country in a slavish one. Andamans, Wake Islands and even Germany are free now. Japan, Germany, China, Abyssinia and other countries have attained their freedom and we hope they will retain that freedom in future and will not slip back into their former state. Though we boast about our old culture and Philosophy, we have to admit that we have been slaves to mere habit and tradition in the name of religion and Philosophy. The

difference between slavery and discipline is neither understood by the masses nor explained to them by their leaders.

Very recently some authorities have expressed their desire, that the system of education should be changed. Several ways and means have been devised and published by different authorities, authors and committees, as well as by certain Government departments. But everyone of these recommendations presuppose, that the present educational system has its defects. The new methods advocated in the place of the old have also its imperfections. Every authority has emphasised the importance of conducting education towards the imparting of industrial and scientific knowledge. The difference in these systems relate to the methods, periods and expense. Everyone has agreed that unless this country is industrialised and our agriculture, engineering, electrical, mechanical and chemical production is based on a modern scientific basis it cannot go forward in the modern world. Hence such scientific education should be introduced in our educational institutions. In introducing such a system, there are of course several drawbacks. Generally the present system puts the cart before the horse and is ill-balanced. We have to

reform this system either from the elementary side to the top, or from the top to the elementary side by every available means.

I played my humble part in this great task with my little experience. I expressed a desire to the Director of Industries to start a Polytechnic to impart knowledge in modern industrial process in a way different from that followed in the existing colleges. Even though I am interested in other industries also, I took the automobile line first because it has not only a great future, but because it is intimately connected with several other lines. This has a vast field and will serve as the foundation for many other industries and will open out the road to the real freedom of our country. It is a difficult road and great courage and patience are required to tread that road. The Director of Industries and Commerce then agreed to my plan to open a Polytechnic and with his effort this Polytechnic was opened last year. On account of the scarcity of hands to deal with machines and apparatus, I agreed to be the Principal for some time and I am still continuing as its Honorary Director. After a few months when the Vice-Chancellor accompanied by a commission visited the Second Grade College with the

idea of raising it to a First Grade College, I strongly opposed the proposal and requested him to do something more useful to the people by starting technical education and offered Rs. 2,00,000/-, buildings and initial equipments for an Engineering College. Subsequently, when I discussed with H. E. Sir Arthur Hope, the then Governor of Madras, His Excellency agreed with my views and accepted my proposal to start an Engineering College. Accordingly the College was opened and is now functioning. I had offered my buildings to the Arthur Hope Polytechnic and for the College of Technology for the duration of the war. Though the war is now over, the institutions are still continuing in my buildings.

Recently I read in the papers that the Central Government proposed that a National Laboratory for food to be opened in the Punjab, a fuel Laboratory in Danbad, a mechanical Laboratory in Jamshedpur, a Chemical Laboratory in Calcutta, a Radio Laboratory in Delhi and a Physics Laboratory in Poona. When I was discussing with the Supply Member, I opposed vehemently the partiality shown by the Central Government and the neglect by them of the Madras Province and he promised to take up our claim and to open

one of the laboratories either in Madras, or in Coimbatore provided that some facilities are given. I promised to place at the disposal of the Government for this purpose any of my buildings in case any of these laboratories are started here immediately. In the beginning of this year, I explained to the authorities the necessity for the acquisition of sufficient site to locate the Engineering College and the laboratories and to provide the future expansion of scientific education. It was then decided after elaborate discussion to acquire 1000 acres. At first it was suggested to locate the College of Technology at the Forest College premises. Then a separate building between the Forest College and the Agricultural College was suggested. But these proposals were dropped, on account of the abnormal cost entailed (Rs. 17,00,000/- for 100 acres). I objected to both these proposals as the site was surrounded by city streets and houses. Every one will agree, that at least during three or four years of their intense studies, the students should be kept aloof from all kinds of activities of the cities in order to save their time and to devote their full attention to their studies. Fortunately, Government dropped this proposal not on account of the above said reason, but due to the high cost. It is of course a funny

idea to drop such a scheme on account of the cost involved. However, it is good that the Government dropped this idea then. Two sites, one at Podanur and another beyond Peelamedu were inspected by the educational authorities and by other officers. Amongst these two places the site at Podanur was dropped due to want of facilities there for water and the site beyond Peelamedu was provisionally decided on, because of the water and other facilities available there. Every one was in favour of this site, because such institutions give a new life to the whole surrounding area. But this portion was somewhat costlier than Podanur, but not so costly as the one near the Agricultural College. In general, such places if found suitable and available for Colleges should be acquired and the money invested is a kind of insurance for the welfare of generations of future scholars and the cost should not be grudged by the Government. After inspection of the site, His Excellency agreeing with our views in general asked the officers to send proposals for acquisition of 1000 acres for the institute. When these proposals and the survey were going on some important and influential land owners objected to the requisition of the sites saying that in these days of "Grow More Food Compaign" the place should not be used for this purpose. The progress of

this scheme was arrested on account of the change in the administrative machinery of the Government. Now I understand that Mr. Ramalingam Chettiar has advised the Government that this College of Technology should be removed to the Forest College and that the Forest College should be transferred to Alandurai and that the present Arts College may also be shifted to the Forest College and the buildings of the Arts College should be given for the use of the Hospital. Superficially viewed, this proposal may appear to be nice. Instead of acquiring enormous space for colleges and hostels we may locate all the colleges in one place, so as to have a common laboratory for all the colleges. This may seem to be economical when considering the enormous expense of building different laboratories in different places instead of having one laboratory for all the colleges. Perhaps the present Minister for Education may take that view. He has to keep in view and to follow the ideas of his leaders and relations and probably desires to show something to me who opposed him in the recent election and several backward ideas of the Congress. If the Minister thinks deeply without prejudice and considers the many advantages economical and educational of the other proposal, which will save valuable time and expense of the

students and if he considers the benefit from the students turned out from the colleges and takes my ideas and intentions in their true perspective, he will agree to select the site at Peelamedu. In the Press, on the platform and in discussions, lectures and talks, the public as well as the students may support the views of Mr. Chettiar, strongly opposing mine. I can establish my views to be correct by the records I have. The percentage of successful students who were not mixed in town activities was 75 where as on the otherhand the percentage of unsuccessful students who mixed in town activities was 75. The attendance of the students not connected with city activities was higher than that of the students connected with city activities as they had to avail sick-leave often. The percentage of successful students mingled in town activities in the fourth year examination was only 60, where as students who were not connected with activities were able to pass the fourth year examination in the first year itself with more percentage of passes. One can now imagine the various advantages for the students themselves, the parents and the poor Government, always in search of cheap lands and cheap goods, if the students are not connected with town activities: (1) The students are able to pass the fourth

year examination in the first year itself thereby saving three years of their precious time and young age and the enormous expense of the poor families as well as of our poor or rich Government. (2) The turnover of the colleges will be more than four times. The Hon'ble Minister for Education has the experience of mingling with students in institutions as the major portion of his life is spent in this line. Therefore, I do not want to say anything more. Hence, will it not be really cheaper in the long run taking into consideration the initial high expense if the buildings and sites are suitable to start with. I do not want to deal on the matter more elaborately here. What I suggested is that if the Government fear the high cost, would it not be advisable to sell the Forest College land which will fetch high price and acquire with that money a suitable bigger site for the College. The Forest College buildings are not suitable for Colleges, but are suitable for a tuberculosis sanatorium or clinic, or as an extension to R. S. Puram. Coimbatore is in need of a tuberculosis sanatorium, because Perundurai is far away and is overcrowded and R. S. Puram is already filled up with tuberculosis patients. Hence, is it not better to locate sanatorium in this place, or would it not be best to sell this 200 acres for Rs. 20,000/– to

50,000/- or above per acre which may fetch 40 to 80 lakhs. With this fourty to eighty lakhs one or two Universities can be built and we need not go a - begging for a National Laboratory from the Central Government. We can have our own laboratories for our own Province and also accommodate any number of colleges, hostels etc., if we buy one thousand acres and set up a city of Universities by itself. For this the Government need not set apart any capital. Not only the capital expense is saved for the Government, but the production of the colleges will be A-1 in quality. The return in the quality of students will be of higher standard and more useful to the nation. The question of location of the site of the college will no doubt raise expectations of people in the localities concerned. People in Podanur will agitate for locating this college in their locality, since the advent of a great educational institution will not only bring new amenities to the people in the site, but will enormously increase the value of land round about the institute. Similarly the location of the college at Peelamedu may be said to have great interest to me and other mill owners who have their factories located in that place. Mr. Ramalingam Chettiar, M. L. C., and his relative the Hon'ble Avanashilingam Chettiar, Minister

for Education may have a similar interest in desiring to locate the college in the Forest College premises, which is adjacent to the "Murugan Mills" in which they are interested and because the school in which the Minister for Education has a greater interest is situated in the same road. But such considerations should not be considered by the Government who should decide the question in public interest and the welfare of future generations and life of the college.

After all these explanations, if the Government still persist in carrying out their old ways, we have to take it as a piece of ill luck for our Province, which will have to be put right by the electorate, when the time arises. I do not want to say anything more and I leave the matter for further consideration by the students, their parents and the Government.

Now I think the Minister for Labour may reject this paper, as it does not come under his portfolio, but comes under the educational department. But by this I would like to warn the Minister, that in case the Educational department is not fully developed, certainly the Labour Department cannot be improved. Further, amongst the Ministers in the Cabinet

including the Prime Minister, the Minister for Labour has more voice, because the Labour Department is the most important of all other Departments. Hence, I hope the Minister for Labour will take an interest in the proper development of Education at least to save the youngsters from the disastrous results.

Hon'ble **Mr. V. V. Giri.**

replied as follows:

I do not think, it is necessary for me to go over the ground, I travelled yesterday. Mr. Naidu says, he is an open enemy of the Congress. I am not prepared to accept it. I am sure one day he will become the greatest of Congressmen, because I knew Mr. Naidu is the worst Fascist. If I, a Socialist can make Mr. Naidu say a good word about Socialism, I can make him say a good word about the Congress also. We both agree about the industrial regeneration of this country. I am not entitled to speak with authority, which he could about industries. I am certain that, Congress or no Congress, he will be helpful to any Government, that wants to improve India industrially.

As regards the sites about which he gave a long discourse, it is really a very little matter as far as I am concerned. I see that he has put some weighty observations, which will certainly receive attention and I assure him that the aspect of the matter, that he has referred to will be examined in all their bearings. So far as the Ministers are concerned, we have no interest in any matters. Mr. Naidu is most

probably anxious as an avowed enemy of the Congress to make the Congress Ministers fight among themselves, so that the Congress Ministry might break. But I assure him and everybody, that the Congress Ministry is as solid as a rock and if it breaks, it will break like a rock. I can assure Mr. Naidu, that the aspects, which he referred to about the sites certainly will be examined, if I can help.

I want students to feel not on communal lines, but on one line only namely that they are Indians first and last. Whatever view you may take in later years, living together now in a common institution, studying together and spending your time together, remember that you are Indians always. Those of us who were in England in our student days realised then how we were knit together. We used to feel that India was one united whole. You should cultivate the ideas, that you are all united, that you are all brothers studying together and that you must be united (prolonged cheers and loud applause).

Hon'ble Mr. Giri visited the Radio Section of the Arthur Hope Palytechnic at "Gopal Bagh" on October 2, accompanied by Mr. A. Khaleeli. They also inspected the sites for the location of the Arthur Hope Polytechnic.

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